

# Limited consensus on the diagnosis and treatment of lymphedema after head and neck cancer: results from an International Delphi study



Coralie R. Arends, Kaat Van Aperen, Lisette van der Molen, Michiel W.M. van den Brekel, Martijn M. Stuiver

**Purpose:** To explore current practice variation and degree of consensus among international clinical experts regarding the diagnosis, classification, measurement, and treatment of head and neck lymphedema (HNL) after head and neck cancer treatment.

## Visualization of our results by ridgeline plots



### Results:

- Round 1: n= 20
- Rounds 2 & 3: n= 17
- 7 researchers & healthcare professionals and 2 other
- Variation in age and years of experience

### Methods:

- Delphi design
- Clinical researchers & healthcare professionals with HNL expertise
- Three rounds
  - Round 1 collect information
  - Rounds 2 & 3 explore practice variation and consensus

### Take home message!

- More research on:
  - Measurement instruments
  - Treatment options
- Implement validated instruments and classification systems
- Share expertise!

### Conclusion & discussion:

- Strong practice variation
- Limited representation in various countries
- Differences in healthcare systems and insurance

